

GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE



PRESS STATEMENT

GAZETTING OF SINGAPORE WORKING GROUP FOR AN ASEAN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISM (MARUAH) AS A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION UNDER THE POLITICAL DONATIONS ACT

This statement is issued by the Registry of Political Donations (RPD) in response to media queries on the gazetting of Singapore Working Group for an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism (MARUAH) as a Political Association under the Political Donations Act.

2 The Political Donations Act that came into effect on 15 Feb 2001 prohibits political parties, political associations, and candidates in parliamentary or presidential elections from accepting donations from impermissible or foreign sources. This is a safeguard to prevent impermissible or foreign entities from interfering in politics in Singapore through funding to local political actors. The Act upholds a fundamental tenet of the political process in Singapore — politics in Singapore should be for Singaporeans only.

3 Under Section 2(1) of the Political Donations Act, the Prime Minister can declare an organisation as a political association for the purposes of the Act if its objectives or activities relate wholly or mainly to politics in Singapore. An organization declared by the Prime Minister to be a political association will be subject to the restrictions on foreign funding in the Act. This allows the safeguards in the Act to be applied to organizations that are involved in the political process in Singapore but which are not registered as political parties.

4. According to the objectives stated in its constitution ([see Annex](#)), MARUAH seeks to promote awareness of and advocate human rights in Singapore and ASEAN by engaging with persons, groups and organizations in Singapore. The issues championed by MARUAH include those of significant public and political controversy in Singapore. There has also been a discernible increase in frequency of MARUAH's activities which have a focus on local politics.

5. Having regard to the totality of MARUAH's objectives and activities, the Prime Minister is of the view that MARUAH should be declared as a political association and subject to the safeguards against foreign interference in the Political Donations Act. MARUAH was gazetted as a Political Association under the Political Donations Act on 9 September 2010.

ISSUED BY : **REGISTRY OF POLITICAL DONATIONS
ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

DATE : **9 September 2010**

MARUAH'S OBJECTIVES AS STATED IN ITS CONSTITUTION

- a) To promote and raise awareness, knowledge and understanding of human rights and human rights related issues at the national, regional and international levels, in Singapore, ASEAN and elsewhere;
- b) To provide a civil society perspective on human rights and related issues at the national, regional and international levels, in Singapore, ASEAN and elsewhere;
- c) To advocate for and work towards the respect for and upholding of human rights in accordance with international and other norms, in Singapore, ASEAN and elsewhere;
- d) To foster national, regional and international co-ordination and development of all activities in relation to human rights and related issues in Singapore, ASEAN and elsewhere; and
- e) To facilitate the education, participation and engagement of persons, groups and organizations in Singapore with respect to human rights and related issues.